2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
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773 cross-legged in the fashion in which he is ordinarily represented in the images, became sunk in meditation. The careless maids all through the hot afternoon forgot about their princely charge, until the returning crowds and the setting sun reminded them of their neglect. Then they hurried to the tree and found that the Zampu tha-bye had maintained its shadow in the exact same position all day as it was in when Prince Theidat was first laid down. Notwithstanding the arc the sun had described, the shade had all along hung over the head of the meditating Payā Alaung.

241 796 643 The festival has therefore special reason to be celebrated by the descendants of the solar kings. It was also in every way a most picturesque fête, pleased the people, and offered a valuable opportunity for squeezing money out of them. King Mindôn never omitted it, even when he was grown old and portly, and little able to follow the slow-stepping bullocks. The ceremony took place in the beginning of June, about the time when the south-west monsoon usually breaks in Mandalay. The order went forth that the king would come out on such and such a day, and the people were enjoined to get ready. Not to see him—far from it. 643 ● 349 The right of a cat to look at a king in Mandalay was not well established. The Amein-daw was issued in order that the heads over ten houses, the Sè-eing gaungs, might see that the road in their district was in proper repair, and that the yazamat had not got out of order. The yazamat, or king's fence, was a kind of lattice-paling put up in every street in the walled town, and in any of those in the suburbs through which the king was likely at any time to pass. It was formed of thick diagonal spars made into hurdles, which were lashed to heavy posts sunk in the ground at regular intervals. The whole was whitewashed, and often flower-pots stood on the top of the posts to enliven the structure a little; and it certainly wanted enlivening a good deal. The lattice-fence undoubtedly looked very neat and tidy, as a long straight road lined with Lombardy poplars does; but it became terribly tiresome, when you found all the streets looking exactly the same, with this six-foot-high heavy wood fence standing within a couple of feet or so of

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the walls of the houses, and shutting out all view of these wooden structures. It had, however, to be kept in constant repair, and the house-reeve has to go round carefully to see that none of the whitewash had been rubbed off, nor any of the transverse bars sprung with the sun. Behind these the entire populace had to stay when the king, or any one of the queens, went out. Woe betide the wretch who was caught outside them when the procession had started. He might consider himself lucky if he escaped with only a belabouring from the fasces of the shrieking lictors. No one was supposed even to look through the little diamond-shaped holes. As a matter of fact they did; but by way of condoning for the offence, they rendered it more difficult by planting flowering shrubs between the bamboo houses and the lattice-work.

The procession on the route out to the Lèya, the royal acre, to be ploughed, was magnificent. The king was clad in all his robes of state: the paso with the daungyôp, the peacock sacred to royalty; the long silk surcoat, or tunic, so thickly crusted with jewels that its colour could not be seen; the tharapu, the spire-like crown, also a mass of precious stones; the twenty-four strings of the Order of the Salwè across his breast; and over his forehead the gold plate, or frontlet. The great gates in front of the stairs from the Hall of Audience were opened for him. Except the King of the Golden Throne no one might pass through them; there was the low red postern at the side for meaner beings—a shrewd device to make every one bow his head to the palace, whether he liked it or not. His majesty mounted the white elephant, which none save he might ride—for is not the noble creature a king himself?

The king mounted the Lord White Elephant at the palace of the latter, to the right of the Hall of Audience; but the princes and ministers, all of whom came to attend the great function in their robes of state, might not enter their howdahs till the stockade of the nandaw had been passed. Then they fell into line in order of precedence, the wuns and wundauks wearing their official mitres—tall red velvet hats, with the top curled back like a nautilus, and the base surrounded with a row of gilt spear-heads. The long

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remainder of the rites, and as this comes in from the elders of the surrounding villages and the kappiyadayakas of neighbouring religious houses, the kyaungthagyi of the deceased's monastery sets about erecting an edifice like a thein, a "monastery of the dead." This is a building, more or less substantial, according to the sanctity of the departed, built of teak, and open all round, with the tapering ecclesiastical pya-that rising over it. Hither the coffin, with the sarcophagus, is carried and deposited on a dais in the centre, a slight railing serving to keep off wild animals. Over it a large white umbrella, with a deep paper-lace fringe, is fixed, and round about hang a number of paintings, similar to those on the payaung-bông, some of them, however, representing the favourite subject of the different races of men as known to the artist—the swarthy Hindoo, the oblique-eyed Chinaman, the Kachin with his pig on his back, and the ghastly white-faced Englishman with dog and gun. Others are simply grotesque, and a few horrible, in their delineations of the horrors of hell. Nevertheless, they are all allowed to hang there, for though it is expressly stated that paintings are among the five species of gifts which are not meritorious (dancing is another), the ordinary layman thinks that the painting he gives must certainly be an exception. Here and there in this odd kind of mortuary chapel are also keinnaya, gay tinselled pasteboard figures of men with birds' lower extremities, manôttha keinnaya and nat keinnaya, the latter having the wings and gorgeous aspect of nat-dêwas. Here the body lies in state, and there is a constant stream of pilgrims—some of them from far distant parts of the country—who come to say their religious sentences, make offerings of flowers and fruit as they would at the pagoda, and contribute what they can afford towards the remainder of the ceremony. [531]

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The body remains till the required sum is collected. During that time numbers of festivals are celebrated at the ne'ban kyaung; bands of music play frequently, and the same people often make three or four different offerings. The lying in state usually lasts several months, sometimes considerably over a year, and it is to be noted that a pôngyi byan never takes place during Lent. [796]

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At last all the funds are collected. An open space outside the town is cleared of jungle, and in the centre of it is erected the funeral pyre. This is constructed of bamboo matting, pasteboard brightly painted, and covered with the usual tinsel. It is, of course, in the form of the seven-roofed spire, the number of roofs, as some think, representing the number of heavens of nat-dêwas. It is square up to a height of fifteen or twenty feet, where there is a platform, on which is placed a sort of cenotaph, resembling the payaung bông in construction and decoration. Above this towers up, fifty or sixty feet higher, the bamboo canopy. When this is ready, a fortunate day is selected by the elders of the town, for they have the management of the funeral rites, to the exclusion of the brethren of the yellow robe. This is announced all over the country-side by sound of gong, and when the appointed day arrives the people come flocking from every side, each quarter or village bringing its pya-thats and padetha-bins, the former similar in construction to the spire on the funeral pile, the "wishing trees" laden with a-hlu for the surviving brethren of the pôngyi who is to be cremated. The spires are arranged round about the great central one, to be burnt along with it; the padetha-bins are delivered at the kyaung.

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There is always a great gathering round the monastery of the dead, where the sramana has been lying in state. The coffin is taken down with great ceremony, and placed on a strongly built, low four-wheeled car, surmounted by the eternal bamboo spire. Now comes a part of the ceremonial which always seems strangely absurd, not to say indecorous, to foreigners. Two, or sometimes four, stout rattan or coir ropes are fastened to the car, and forthwith all the able-bodied men present commence a frantically contested and uproarious tug-of-war. No sides whatever are selected, or numbers agreed upon. Reinforcements are always ready to back up a side which seems on the point of losing, and prematurely ending the struggle; and when a man loses his wind he leaves go his hold and sits down to have a rest. Sometimes the rope breaks, and then the progress of the funeral has to be suspended till a new one is procured and [illegible] on, for there is no rule as to a side abiding by its [illegible]. Sometimes the contest goes on for two or three

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The tall flag-staff (*tagúndaing*) is the most striking of the temple-accessories. It consists of a decorated spar, sixty to eighty feet high, from which floats a long streamer. The head of the pole is ornamented with a mythical animal, generally the *hintha* (*hansa*, a fantastic figure of the Brahmany duck) or else the *kínnayá*, a monster with the body of a woman in princely array and the wings and legs of a bird. The butt of the *tagúndaing*, instead of being planted in the ground, is frequently set between piles which are carved into figures of the mythical *thadyá* (p. 186, No. 7). The pole is held up by transverse bars passing through it and the piles.

79. TAGUNDAING WITH KINNAYA.

Colossal lions (*chinthé*, No. 56) of the Burmese conventional type guard the temple approaches—monsters differing as much in their way from the prototype as the lions of our own heraldry.

Stands shaped like a *hallin* or throne, on which flowers and fruit are offered, are placed on the temple platforms.

Great bells are hung at every shrine (No. 97). The votary takes the deer-antler off the bar and strikes first the ground and then the bell. This is to call to witness beings both under the earth and above the earth and make them participators in the merit of the act of worship. The Burman bell has noble proportions and is hung by metal clasps of rich design, figuring the mythical dragon (*nagá*, No. 47). The tone of the bells is not rich, owing partly to the form, partly to flaws in casting. The greatest bell in Burma is that cast by the Emperor Bodaw Payá, on the European model, in 1790, for the temple he began at Mingún. It is said to weigh eighty-eight tons. A historic bell

80. TAGUNDAING WITH HINTHA.

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164. FOREST ZAYAT AND WATER-STAND (P. 63).

requirements? To which the *yahán* cordially responds, *pyippa, pyippa, tagédaw*—that I am, my valued supporter! Just as salutations are ordinarily omitted, so thanks are only expressed for special favours. The sense of obligation is conveyed by adopting courteous forms of speech, in which the particle *ba* always figures. The set forms of *please* and *thank you* are thus dispensed with. Where, however, a disparity of age or position exists, every act of the superior becomes

[431] by courtesy a boon. A Burman is disconcerted by a simple present, as well as by *bakshish* and payments above the stipulation, which he is particular to make beforehand. But when approaching a superior with a request, the inferior bears an offering of courtesy, generally fruit. The inferior makes *shikó* both on approaching and taking leave. A Burman does not stand, in the presence of his superior, but squats down. When he has occasion to pass close to his superior, he does not walk erect but crouches. By well-bred Burmans the gestures of respect are performed in a very graceful manner. Every Burman, the *yahán* not excepted, on ascending the *kyaunéing* of a house, removes his

[356] sandals or shoes. As we Westerns respect the *roof* that our host has provided by doffing our head-gear, so Easterns respect the *floor* that is provided—an observance of a practical nature where the floor serves both for seat and table. In an analogous way to our greeting with the hat, the Oriental shows respect by slipping the sandals even outside the house. Still more courteous is the practice of washing the feet before entering a house or *kyaung*. Burmans always contrive to sit so as to hide the soles of the feet or to turn them

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165. RECEIVING A VISITOR.

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168. VILLAGE CHEVAUX-DE-FRISE.

away from the company. In a similar spirit of courtesy a rider dismounts and umbrellas are closed. Among acts of discourtesy few are accounted so grave by the Burmans as that of awakening a sleeper. The reluctance to disturb a sleeper is connected with the belief that the spirit (*leippya*) leaves the body during sleep (p. 197). It is looked upon as a weakness to show resentment and temper (*dawtha*, p. 44). A visitor in a house is offered a new mat to sit upon, water to drink, betel to chew, and a spittoon. If it be meal-time he is invited to partake; otherwise he is asked if he has had food, and refreshment is brought. Although the quota of leisure that falls to everyone is greater in Burma than anywhere else, owing to the wide-spread prosperity of the inhabitants, there is perhaps no country in which every man, woman, and child is less exempt from business concern. Thus it happens that after a few commonplaces, conversation inevitably gravitates to business—prices, harvests, prospects. Next in interest come the festival programmes, the local celebrities and their doings. In every house there are scales and weights, and the household is engaged in occasional or regular trade. Accounts in money and kind are current between neighbours. Whatever spare produce remains is exposed for sale.

The villages either have a quick fence of impenetrable thorny bamboo (*myinwa*), or a hedge of cactus and briar or bamboo *chevaux-de-frise*. In some parts they are open. The old towns (*myó*) had ramparts and stockades (Nos. 6, 371, 387). The highest sites about the village are for the *zedi*, the *Payá-myo* or sacred ground, the next best are for the *kyaung*. Then comes the enclosure of

167. APPROACH TO THE VILLAGE.

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378. JUDGE PRESIDING IN COURT (YON).

fixed annual revenue to the treasury, and he retained such excess as he could raise for himself. Even more cynical than the appellation of *myoza*, but nevertheless officially accepted, is that of his deputy, *thwethauttyi*, or bloodsucker. The revenue exactions were variable, and were levied with little regularity; outlying localities escaped altogether. The people of such places were almost without ostensible govern-

[651] ment. The 3-rupee household tax of 1862 had advanced to 10 Rs. in 1886 (*Thathameda*). There were also special imposts and special exemptions. The original style and address of the king came to be adopted by his deputies, as more high-sounding titles were devised for him. Every officer is now addressed *Payà* and spoken of as *min*, which means ruler, prince. The full style of high officials used to occupy several lines of a document; there were the traditional titles of the office and territory, the prerogatives granted by the king, conspicuous among which were the number of red and gold umbrellas allotted to the rank, and the executive powers, such as *dàbaing*, holder of the sword. The last-named symbol was borne before the officer as arbiter of life. The lower grades of office were, and in many places still are, hereditary, especially that of *thadyi*, the appointed headman who levies the taxes from the people (literally the poor, *sinyètha*). The Burmese correlative of *official* is significant; no matter how wealthy he be, one who holds no office is a "poor" man—at the mercy of the *asbya*. If the rapacity of an official under the old *régime* grew intolerable, he incurred the risk of assassination, without much likelihood of being avenged by the central authority. The religious aversion to be

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377. THE CITY GATE (PYA-GI.

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175 Aláung Payâ established in 1754, is the involved account of the struggles for mastery of its three imperial races, the Burman, the Mun, and the Shan.* As already stated in the Introduction, the isolation of the valley of the Irawadi from the neighbouring civilisations by great natural barriers, favoured the development of an independent and distinct civilisation. The neutralization of those barriers it is that now exposes Burma to the sudden competition of races inured to worse conditions.

* See Appendix A, CHRONOLOGY.

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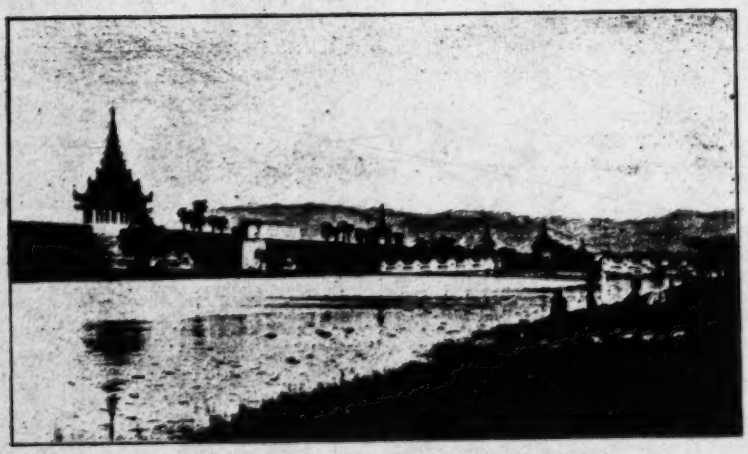

287. THE CITY MOAT.